

Assessing the Ecological Condition of Veracruz, Mexico, Estuaries

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The objective of the study was to collect information in order to assess the condition of estuarine waters within the state of Veracruz and provide data to support an overall assessment of Gulf of Mexico estuaries. Monitoring has been conducted in estuaries of the US portion of the Gulf of Mexico since 1991, but a complete assessment of the region cannot be conducted without inclusion of the Mexico portion. Researchers from Veracruz were concerned with the condition of their coastal waters and were seeking advice on how best to conduct an assessment. EPA proposed conducting this research as part of an international technology transfer activity between EPA's Office of Research and Development and the state of Veracruz's Sub-secretary of the Environment. Coastal estuaries of the state of Veracruz, MX, were jointly sampled during June and July 2002 using an integrated probabilistic design and a common set of indicators developed by EPA's National Coastal Assessment program. Preliminary information has identified several areas of potential concern within Veracruz related to eutrophication. With the completion of this pilot study, other gulf coast states within Mexico have expressed interest in conducting similar studies.